

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:969
ANSWERED ON:25.11.2002
CHOKING OF SOUTH ASIA BY SMOG
CHINTAMAN NAVSHA WANAGA;RAMJI MANJHI

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned 'Is a blanket of smog choking South Asia' appearing in the Times of India dated August 13, 2002;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (c) the manner in which the Government propose to check pollution menace in India?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS(SHRI T.R. BAALU)

(a),(b) and (c) An international collaborative study 'Indian Ocean Research Experiment (INDOEX)' has indicated haze over the Indian Ocean. The haze is not a permanent feature of the atmosphere over the Asian region and the surrounding seas. It occurs only during January - March, the season in which INDOEX observations were made in 1999. Conclusive data are not available to co-relate the impact of haze on the monsoon and/or agriculture of our country. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has, this year, brought out a report entitled 'The Asian Brown Cloud: Climate and other Environmental Impacts' based on INDOEX. The press release of the UNEP launching the said report paints an alarming picture of the impacts of this haze on both regional and global scales. However, most of the concerns expressed therein are not well substantiated by reliable modelling studies or experimental observations. The existing legal and policy framework, supported by several initiatives to protect and improve the environment, addresses the concerns of air pollution in the country.